



# Eagle 6 Sends

Teammates,

This Holiday weekend, many of us reflected on the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Yesterday, my family and I had the honor and privilege to hear Dr. Sonny Hereford III speak on his experience regarding our country's civil rights movement. Dr. Hereford is a retired physician and civil rights leader who taught at several colleges and universities in North Alabama. Practicing medicine in Huntsville starting in 1956, Dr. Hereford chose not to pursue higher paying and more prestigious opportunities across our Nation. Instead, he dedicated his life to changing his local and regional communities.

His travels across our country and the world showed stark contrast to the segregation he was accustomed. He remembered eating in a California restaurant next to famous actress Barbara Stanwyck, but quipped he "wouldn't be served at a greasy spoon back in Huntsville." Dr. Hereford lived in an Alabama where he and his family had no place to stay, eat, drink, or get gas on a trip from Huntsville to Mobile. He once carried a sign that read, "Worried about freedom in Laos and Berlin? We want freedom here."

Overcoming Governor George Wallace's objections and winning a court ruling, Dr. Hereford's son was the first child integrated into an all-white elementary school in Alabama. Dr. Hereford reminisced about peaceful protests, boycotts, and escorting Dr. King during a Huntsville visit. He proudly stated that he never smoked a cigarette, drank a drop of alcohol, or owned a fire arm. "Not even a hunting rifle." He authored a book entitled, "Beside the Troubled Waters: a Black Doctor Remembers Life, Medicine, and Civil Rights in an Alabama Town." He filmed a short documentary called "A Civil Rights Journey" about Huntsville's civil rights movement. Footage from that film was included in the 2004 Oscar winning "Mighty Times: The Children's March" that took place in Birmingham in the 1960's.

Dr. Hereford is a true pioneer and agent for positive change. He faced scrutiny and even intense hatred from fellow doctors and nurses, but he courageously led a peaceful movement in dangerous times that resulted in Huntsville's integration nearly two years prior to President Johnson's signing the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

I hope everyone had a safe, joyous, productive, and reflective Holiday weekend.

Many thanks,  
VR,

EAGLE 6

Colonel David F. Stewart  
Commander, 2nd Recruiting Brigade  
Huntsville, AL  
M: (866)221-2554  
O: (256)450-9500